

# Cove Infant School

92 Fernhill Road, Cove, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 9DP

**Inspection dates** 9–10 December 2015

**Overall effectiveness** **Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Pupils make excellent progress, from entry in Reception to Year 2, across all subjects.
- Almost all pupils reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school. The school prepares pupils very well for the next stage in their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates.
- The headteacher's passion for teaching and learning is shared by all staff. There is a continuous focus on improvement supported by ambitious action plans. However, the plans do not always link closely enough to pupils' outcomes.
- Governors use their accurate understanding of pupils' progress information to provide rigorous challenge to senior leaders. Governors support the drive for ongoing development very effectively.
- Middle leaders have a great impact on pupils' achievement. They make astute changes to the curriculum that lead to improvements in learning.
- High-quality assessment ensures that no pupil is left behind in any subject. Teachers quickly identify and support pupils who need extra help.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to provide very effective challenge and support to pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. All pupils succeed because teachers make sure everyone understands before moving onto a new topic.
- Pupils behave extremely well. Children in the early years behave impeccably. Adults expect the best and pupils deliver it.
- Personal development is a key strength of the school. Pupils are confident and have mature attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded through the work of the school. Puppets and stories help children to understand the importance of the schools' values and gain an early understanding of British values.
- The lively curriculum immerses pupils in learning. Pupils' interests are captured by exciting topics as well as the meaningful problems that introduce each theme. The curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils across the full range of subjects.
- The Reception Year develops children's social and emotional skills very effectively. Children are confident, expressive and leave ready to take on the challenges of Year 1.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Sharpen the school improvement plan so that it includes measurable outcomes to evaluate accurately the success of different groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher is passionate about teaching and learning. This drives all that she does. Staff are equally enthusiastic and strongly committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils. In this dynamic school there is a culture of continuous evaluation and improvement that ensures success for all.
- The deputy headteacher provides excellent support to the headteacher. She has played an important part in setting up the very effective assessment system that enables teachers to quickly identify and help pupils who are not on track to reach the expected standards for their age. This robust approach ensures that pupils progress very well in each subject.
- The headteacher gives middle leaders freedom to innovate in order to improve teaching and learning. For example, the mathematics leader has introduced a popular 'maths library' that enables pupils to take home mathematical games that consolidate their learning. Middle leaders contribute well to school improvement.
- Middle leaders have had a great impact on pupils' achievement. All middle leaders fully understand and use pupils' progress information. Each of them has used this to make astute changes to the curriculum, such as introducing specific lessons to practise recalling key number facts. As a result of their work, improvements in pupils' progress are evident.
- All leaders are actively involved in checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders use this to ensure that teachers meet high expectations and standards of teaching and assessment are consistent across classes. Consequently, teaching is outstanding.
- The headteacher rigorously holds teachers to account for pupils' progress. Teachers' appraisal is used well to identify appropriate training for each teacher that improves their practice and nurtures new leaders. The headteacher recognises the importance of building leadership and provides all teachers with suitable responsibilities to develop their skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive highly effective support that enables them to achieve as well as their classmates. A specialist teacher works closely with class teachers to provide personalised lessons that precisely match pupils' learning needs. Additional funding is used very well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers tailor programmes of support to ensure pupils make important gains in their learning. Additional support dovetails into work in the classroom. Leaders and teachers review this support regularly and adjust it to ensure that these pupils make as much progress as possible.
- The exceptionally well-planned curriculum provides rich opportunities across a wide range of subjects. Pupils learn through relevant and exciting projects that each cover five different subjects. Careful planning through the year ensures each subject is covered well. Reading, writing, mathematics and computing is integral to every project. Each project starts with a hook to capture pupils' interests and ends with an outcome that is shared with parents. Topics such as 'pieces of eight', 'dragonology' and 'pick a penguin' engage pupils well with lessons and homework. Teachers regularly review the projects, taking into account parents' views and pupils' progress information. The curriculum is responsive to pupils' needs and a defining feature of the school.
- Extra-curricular clubs provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their musical, creative, physical and academic skills. Pupils enjoy activities such as tennis, sewing, playing the recorder, computing and multi-skills sports. The clubs add to the wide breadth of learning already provided by the school's curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work. The school has identified six important values that link to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The values are taught systematically within the curriculum and through assemblies. Friendly puppets and stories ensure pupils understand the values. For example, Panit the peacock promotes spirituality and helps pupils to make sense of this challenging concept by encouraging them to participate in reflection. Consequently, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong.
- The school's values relate well to British values. Values such as independence link well with individual liberty and democracy. In assembly, tolerance and mutual respect were promoted well because pupils were able to see the similarities between the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and advent. Leaders are reviewing the curriculum to further strengthen opportunities to prevent radicalisation. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders are committed to promoting equal opportunities. On the very rare occasions that pupils make comments that may be viewed as derogatory, staff are quick to intervene and prevent recurrence. Staff enable pupils to value differences and learn to respect others.
- All leaders have a strong understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Senior leaders use pupils' progress information incisively to design ambitious improvement plans and continually refine teaching and learning. Senior leaders set ambitious targets for pupils' progress. However, plans do not always relate closely enough to these targets.
- Additional sports funding is effectively spent. Like all aspects of the school's provision, the impact of the sports funding is regularly reviewed to maximise effectiveness. As a result of careful spending, teachers' subject knowledge has increased, as have pupils' participation rates.
- The local authority rightly judges that the school requires only light-touch support. Advisers helpfully validate senior leaders' school self-evaluation. Leaders wisely select external support that enables them to further enrich and extend the lively curriculum.
- Almost all parents are extremely positive about all aspects of the school's work. Parents value the close working relationships between themselves, staff and their children. Parents particularly appreciate the way that the school instils a love of learning in their children.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body has high expectations of everybody. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's performance and use this to provide rigorous challenge to senior leaders. Like senior leaders, governors maintain a continual focus on improvement. Only the best will do.
  - Governors take their responsibilities seriously. To ensure that they keep a close eye on important work such as safeguarding, governors have restructured their committees and changed the way that they work. Governors are thoroughly committed to their roles; they regularly participate in training to update their skills and knowledge.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Robust systems and procedures are in place to help keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure that a culture of vigilance is sustained by prompting staff to think, 'it could happen here'.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding**

- Teaching is outstanding and so pupils make sustained progress in the early years and through Key Stage 1.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Lessons are suitably challenging and pupils are involved in setting the next steps in their learning. Through Key Stage 1, pupils are increasingly involved in setting their own ways to measure success using the knowledge that they have gained so far. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, pupils decided that to write a good riddle they needed to start with a vague clue and be more specific towards the end.
- Teachers frequently check pupils' learning during lessons. They use this information well to adapt their teaching, plan the next lesson and match pupils' learning needs carefully. For example, the most-able pupils are provided with challenges that require them to apply their learning in a new way, such as writing for a different audience. Teachers rightly ensure that all pupils understand before moving onto a new topic. As a result, all pupils succeed.
- Pupils receive high-quality feedback from teachers that improves learning. Pupils enthusiastically make changes to their written work using teachers' suggestions. They like it when teachers put sticky notes on their work that show them where to make improvements. One pupil said, 'I give marking five out of five.'
- Teachers apply their excellent subject knowledge to support and challenge pupils very well. Teachers use questioning appropriately to deepen pupils' understanding and address misconceptions. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were asked, 'Why do we usually start with the biggest number for subtraction?' This prompted a discussion about negative numbers that took pupils' learning further.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers rightly aim to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills. This means that pupils are able to apply their knowledge and develop secure mathematical understanding. Extended mathematical learning takes place during 'maths weeks' where pupils have more time to grasp difficult concepts. In a recent 'maths week', pupils learned about fractions while planning a 60<sup>th</sup> birthday party.

- Pupils read well because reading is taught thoroughly. There are daily lessons in reading and phonics (the sounds that letters make). Pupils also read regularly to adults and discuss what they have read. As a result, pupils show good understanding when reading.
- Right from the start, teachers provide pupils with meaningful reasons to write. In the Reception Year, children wrote important letters to Santa and made 'records' in a doctor's surgery. Pupils are expected to use their knowledge of phonics to spell tricky words and to include the right features of writing such as using 'I' in a diary extract written as if on the Titanic. Consequently, pupils enjoy writing and write to a high standard.
- Teaching assistants provide excellent support to pupils. Leaders ensure that teaching assistants receive training that equips them with good subject knowledge. They use this well to help individuals and different groups of pupils overcome misconceptions and break down challenging tasks into manageable steps.
- All parents feel that their child is taught well and that they receive valuable information about their child's learning. Homework is equally appreciated as pupils enjoy completing it because it links very well to their exciting projects.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**is outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- From the early years onwards, the school equips children with the confidence and skills to succeed. Pupils have mature attitudes to learning and display sustained concentration and determination. For example, Year 1 pupils were seen successfully completing writing on computers, away from the classroom, drawing on their phonics knowledge and each other for support when they needed it.
- Pupils enthusiastically undertake a range of responsibilities such as the 'perfect peg monitor'. These roles enable pupils to make very effective contributions to school life. The school council has recently agreed new rules for the dinner hall that ensure that it is a calm and happy place.
- School records indicate that bullying is very rare. Pupils know that bullying is when 'someone is horrible and it doesn't stop'. Pupils are confident that teachers sort out any problems quickly. Some pupils demonstrate a sensible, considered approach to managing friendship problems. One said, 'I always give people one or two chances before I tell a teacher'.
- Safety is an important part of the curriculum and pupils' welfare is rightly prioritised. Consequently, pupils feel safe and have an appropriate understanding of how to stay safe. For example, pupils know how to use the internet and cross the road safely.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Around the school and over time, pupils behave extremely well. Entry into assembly is suitably respectful. Pupils showed a high level of self-control when selecting equipment in a music lesson. Pupils know what is expected of them and consistently rise to the challenge.
- Pupils are polite, welcoming and contribute well to discussions. At the school's breakfast and after school club, Explorers, pupils learn to take turns to talk, show good manners and share. Pupils sit down to eat together. During lessons, every request includes the word please and pupils enjoy conversations. Adults set high expectations of pupils' behaviour and clear routines are in place.
- There are very few incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders respond immediately and appropriately whenever necessary, working with parents and the school's emotional literacy support assistant to help individuals to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Consequently, there is no evidence of recurrence.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is above average. All groups of pupils attend equally well. Pupils are punctual and arrive at school ready to learn. Leaders' increased expectations have led to improved attendance and a reduction in lateness.

## Outcomes for pupils

## are outstanding

- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, make considerable progress from their starting points across the range of subjects.
- Children in the early years make strong progress. Some slight variations in the rate of progress between some areas of learning are narrowing because leaders have made astute changes to the curriculum.
- For the past four years, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 has been significantly above the national average. Almost all pupils achieve the expected level. Pupils leave the school very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' attainment in other subjects is equally high. A very large majority of pupils are working at or above expectations for their age across the curriculum. This is because leaders place a strong emphasis on securing learning in every subject.
- Achievement in reading is a particular strength. There is a strong emphasis on securing reading skills, especially among those who find it most challenging. Most pupils achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 national check on phonics. Those who do not, receive additional support that enables them to catch up and develop a range of strategies for reading. Pupils resoundingly express a love of reading.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is equal to or better than their classmates. These pupils receive personalised additional teaching. As a result, all disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 1 are attaining well, working at or above expectations for their age. There is no attainment gap.
- Those pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make very good progress across all subjects. Additional support effectively enables these pupils to make rapid gains because it caters precisely for their individual needs and links very well to work in class.
- The most-able pupils achieve well. Pupils' work books show that teachers routinely challenge the most able and extend their learning very effectively.

## Early years provision

## is outstanding

- Children join the Reception classes with a wide range of skills and abilities. However, the majority have starting points below those typical for their age. All groups of children make rapid progress and a large majority reach a good level of development. High-quality teaching, leadership and personal development prepare children very well for Year 1.
- The early years leader shows an unrelenting ambition to improve children's outcomes. The leader has an excellent understanding of children's progress information and uses this accurately to improve the provision. Last year, boys' and girls' attainment was more even than in 2014 because the right changes were made to the curriculum. This year, there are increased opportunities for children to develop their mathematical understanding in 'number time' lessons. As a result, children are already making even better progress in this area of learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of children and ensure that they make appropriate learning choices. Adults regularly check that children are involved in activities to promote their learning so that no time is wasted. Children have access to stimulating activities related to all of the areas of learning both inside and outside the classroom. As a result, all children make at least good progress across all of the areas of learning.
- Adults use their knowledge of how children learn to good effect. Staff ask children challenging questions, give them opportunities to think hard and increase their vocabulary. For example, a teacher posed a number problem to a small group of children: 'I had 11 baubles on my Christmas tree but four have fallen off. How many are left on the tree?' The children talked about their thinking and completed this calculation correctly because adults show them how to do this well.
- Children are very well prepared socially and emotionally for Year 1. They are encouraged to be themselves. A group of boys delighted in feeding a very receptive teaching assistant 'boy cakes' made with extra slugs and worms! Adults take time to get to know children and there are many opportunities to develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Consequently, children are comfortable, confident and behave impeccably.

- Staff care for the children well and there are robust systems in place to keep children safe. Children show maturity and act safely. A small group of 'builders' were well prepared for their work with a whiteboard for 'notes' and hard hats. These children used small hammers carefully because they had been taught how to.
- Parents speak highly of the provision. They value the very effective arrangements for settling in such as home visits, as well as opportunities to find out about the curriculum and share 'wow moments'. Parents also enjoy the exhibitions of children's work at the end of each topic. Leaders take careful note of parents' feedback and use this to drive further improvements in the early years.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116141
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001145

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	177
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Pearson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Sampson
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 543737
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://coveinfantschool.co.uk/">http://coveinfantschool.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1–2 February 2011

## Information about this school

- Cove Infant School is an average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- Most pupils are White British. Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.
- Children in the Reception Year attend full time.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were conducted jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also looked at pupils' writing and mathematics books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, pupils and two members of the governing body.
- An inspector spoke with the Chair of Governors on the telephone and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to seven parents on the playground and took into account 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- A range of documents were looked at, including the school's information about pupils' achievement and records concerning pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

Caroline Dulon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julie Sackett	Ofsted Inspector
Lea Hannam	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

